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Letter dated 6 October 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The deployment of the observers of the mission of the European Union observers in the security zones along the borders of Abkhazia and South Ossetia proceeds smoothly. We note that they are beginning to interact with the Russian peacekeepers, who are being withdrawn from those zones. At the same time, the situation remains extremely tense. Dangerous incidents persistently occur in the region.

On 3 October 2008, an unattended automobile towed from the security zone detonated on the territory of the peacekeepers' headquarters in Tskhinval. Seven servicemen, including Ivan Petrik, head of the Joint Staff of the Peacekeeping Forces in South Ossetia, died at the site of the explosion; four people were wounded. According to our data, the car was loaded with up to 20 kilograms of dynamite. On the same day, in the Leninogorsk district, there was an attempt on the life of A. Margiev, head of the local administration. On 5 October in Tskhinval, an employee of a construction company involved in the restoration of the Republic of South Ossetia's residential districts died as a result of firing from the Georgian side. Lastly, a new incident occurred on 6 October. When a column of Russian peacekeepers, who are being withdrawn pursuant to the Medvedev-Sarkozy plan, was proceeding to the north-east of the city of Zugdidi, an unidentified explosive device detonated in front of the lead vehicle. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

We are fully convinced that the Georgian side is not content with a smooth and gradual transfer of functions from the Russian peacekeepers to the European Union observers as was agreed by President Dmitry Medvedev and President Nicolas Sarkozy. The series of terrorist acts seems to have been designed precisely to thwart that process and dramatically exacerbate the situation. We should not like this to happen. As before, we intend to complete the full withdrawal of our military from the territory of Georgia right on time, i.e., by 10 October 2008.

We trust that the United Nations, which has its observers in the regions of Georgia adjacent to Abkhazia, will give the most serious consideration to such provocations by the Georgian side and do everything necessary to prevent them from occurring in the future.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vitaly **Churkin**

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